

## 2014 Public Input

The process for receiving public input on proposed waterfowl seasons is very condensed because of the timing of the Federal regulation schedule; however, our most active waterfowl groups and individuals are aware of the time frame. A total of 182 individuals offered comments on the waterfowl hunting seasons in addition to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Migratory Committee and several waterfowl groups. The following tools were used to involve interested parties in the rule making process.

- **Mail survey – winter 2013-14.** Following the 2013 waterfowl season a scientifically designed survey was mailed out to a random selection of 1000 Wisconsin waterfowl hunters as we have done every other year for the last several years. This survey provided us information on waterfowl hunter experiences and preferences after 3 years with a new 3 duck zone configuration.
- **Rule process information** - Beginning in May we issued preliminary information and instructions on how the public could provide input to the regulation setting process through press releases, the Department website and direct mailings to waterfowl groups. Over 18,000 people are now on GovDelivery notices regarding topics related to waterfowl management and hunting. This list was provided regular updates during the process.
- **Telephone, email and written comment.** Public comments and questions began coming in during June through telephone calls and emails. These were accepted through August 7.
- **July 10, Staff attended the LaCrosse County Conservation Alliance** annual waterfowl meeting to present information and received input primarily on the Mississippi River Zone season. About 27 waterfowl hunters were in attendance.
- **August 2 – Migratory Committee of the Conservation Congress. Plover.** Staff presented information on the status of waterfowl and potential season structures. The committee made suggestions for the hunting season proposal and voted on all aspects. Committee had 21 members present.
- **August 2 – Post-Flyway. Plover.** A public meeting was held to present the population status and proposed season structure in an informal setting with waterfowl groups and interested individuals. Several conservation organizations or individuals were present. The groups represented were: Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF), Wisconsin Waterfowl Association (WWA), La Crosse County Conservation Alliance (LCCA), Hunters Rights Coalition, Lake Poygan Sportsman's Club, Burlington Conservation Club, Mead duck hunters and Black Slough Conservation Club (BSCC). A total of 18 people attended
- **August 4-7, Public Hearings.** Four public hearings were held around the state and 71 people attended overall. Attendees were presented with population status information and the proposed waterfowl rules. Following a period for clarifying questions, individuals could make oral testimony or provide written comments. The comments offered during these various meetings are included below under each major issue.
  - **LaCrosse** - 20 people attended, 10 gave oral testimony
  - **Rice Lake** - 3 people attended, 0 gave oral testimony
  - **Appleton** – 28 people attended, 12 gave oral testimony
  - **Pewaukee** – 20 people attended, 6 gave oral testimony

### Public input Summary:

Hearing attendance and public input volume was below 2013 but similar to prior years with a total of 182 individual comments and several statewide or local conservation groups representing

thousands of members submitting comment. The input was in favor of most aspects of the waterfowl season proposals (Appendix 2).

## **Appendix 2. Migratory Game Bird Public Comment Summary 2014**

***Bold/Italics = Department proposal***

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Email/ Hearing/other</u>	<u>Groups at Meetings</u>	<u>Cons. Congress</u>
<b>Mississippi River Duck Zone, Sept 27-Oct 5 &amp; Oct 18-Dec 7</b>	<u>58</u>	5	<b>X</b>
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct 4-12, Oct 18-Dec 7	<u>23</u>		
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct 4 - Dec 2	<u>4</u>	1	
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Oct 1	<u>3</u>		
Mississippi River Duck Zone, Sept 27-Oct 5 & Oct 15-Dec 4	-	3	
<b>North Duck Zone opener, Sept 27-Nov 25</b>	73	8	<b>X</b>
North Duck Zone opener, later	4		
Statewide	6		
North Duck Zone, Oct 4 with split	14	1	
<b>South Duck Zone opener, Oct 4 - Oct 12, Oct 18 - Dec 7</b>	83	6	<b>X</b>
South Duck Zone Oct 4 - Dec 2	13		
South Duck Zone Open later	5		
South Duck Zone open Sept 27 - Oct 5, Oct 11 - Nov 30	5	1	
South Duck Zone open Sept 27 - Oct 5, Oct 18 - Dec 7		2	
Statewide	4		
<b>South Duck Zone split, 5-day, Oct 13-17</b>	86	9	<b>X</b>
South Duck Zone, no split	8		
<b>Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, 9am</b>	46	4	<b>X</b>
Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, 1/2 hr before sunrise	48	5	
Duck Shooting Hours on Opening Day, noon	2		
<b>Exterior Goose Zone, Sept 16, split in South and Miss River during duck split</b>	66	8	<b>X</b>
Exterior Goose Zone, Sept 16, no split in South	1	1	
Exterior Goose with split in north	3		
<b>Hen Mallard Bag Limit, 1/day</b>	78	9	<b>X</b>
2 hen mallard daily bag limit	15		
<b>Youth Hunt Sept 20+21</b>	76	7	<b>X</b>
No Youth Hunt	1	2	
Total comments	182		
Attendance at Public Hearings	71		